Advising Bar Applicants
July 2018

Bar Review Overview:
- Jurisdiction:
  - VA Bar exam overview
  - UBE overview
- Course:
  - BARBRI
    - Start date: May 21 (VA)
    - Live lecture in Richmond, on-line streaming or recorded lectures
  - Kaplan
    - Start date: May 22 (VA)
    - Streaming in classroom or watch at home
  - Themis
    - Start date: May 14 (VA)
    - Recorded lectures, watch on own

Initial outreach:
- Advisee expectations
- Prioritize your time and energy as an advisor
- Encourage high-risk students taking VA bar to meet weekly with Emmy and/or Kevin Frost for essay review and individual tutoring
  - This service is open to all grads but we particularly encourage high-risk students to participate
  - Emmy schedules her own appointments, an AA will be scheduling for Kevin Frost

Accountability:
- Regular follow up with students
  - Weekly with at-risk students
  - Bi-weekly with other students
- Bar review companies track students’ progress and will make that information available to us
- Interim deadlines
  - Simulated MBE exam(s)
  - Graded essay assignments

Time management:
- Importance of scheduling, routine
- Treat bar prep like a full-time, demanding job
- Remind students that passage rates are substantially higher for students who complete at least 75-80% of their course
- Interim deadlines (see above)
- Prioritize PRACTICE, tempting to procrastinate practice
- Is student working? Other demands on time, e.g. childcare, etc.?

Trouble shooting:
- Help students find assistance if issues arise
• Common questions/concerns:
  • Substantive law questions
    o The bar review courses have mechanisms for submitting substantive questions
    o Is the students getting too “in the weeds?”
  • MBE performance
    o How should a student be performing?
      ▪ On the actual MBE, a student must answer about 65% of the question correctly to get a scaled score of 140 (passing in VA).
      ▪ The multiple-choice practice questions are written by the bar review companies and are not necessarily the same level of difficulty as the questions on the actual bar. Also, students should – and do – improve over the course of the summer.
      ▪ The bar review courses provide targets scores for interim assignments during the summer. Also, some companies advise students how they are performing relative to others.
    o If a student is underperforming, refer him/her to Emmy and/or the contact person at his/her bar review course.
    o Excellent additional MBE resource: Strategies & Tactics for the MBE (Emanuel Bar Review) 6th Edition (available on Amazon for about $75)
  • Essay Performance
    o How should a student be performing?
      ▪ On the VA bar, an applicant must score an average of 7 out of 10 points on the MBE
      ▪ The bar review companies assign a few – not nearly enough – practice essays for students to submit for grading. The grading is somewhat hit or miss.
      ▪ The VA Bar Examiners release some example 10-point answers.
        http://barexam.virginia.gov/bar/barsampleanswer.html
    o If a student is underperforming or is at-risk, refer him/her to Emmy.
  • Time Management (see above)
  • Stress Management
    o Self-care
      ▪ Exercise
      ▪ Healthy habits
      ▪ Balance
    o Positive outlook

- Advice:
  o PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE!